



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: February 3, 2025

SUBJECT: Southern Deschutes County Groundwater Monitoring Project Results /
Department of Environmental Quality

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Information only.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

DEQ representatives will discuss the results of groundwater monitoring in Southern Deschutes County. In 2022, DEQ announced that they would be testing groundwater for approximately 100 wells for free in Southern Deschutes County as part of a statewide study of groundwater pollution. DEQ collected samples in 2023 and 2024 from a mix of private and public wells for nitrate, arsenic, pesticides and other contaminants. In November, the Community Development Department (CDD) received well sampling data in a tabular format from DEQ. It revealed the following:

- Many of the sampled wells are new;
- In several well locations there are non-detect (negligible) traces of nitrates;
- Certain wells north of Burgess Road and in La Pine showed increases in nitrates;
- The well data is a snapshot in time that can be used and referenced in future well sampling events;
- The data does not change our understanding of the La Pine subbasin; it is still vulnerable to nitrate loading; and
- Nitrate-reducing onsite systems are still necessary to protect the aquifer.

BUDGET IMPACTS:

None

ATTENDANCE:

Greg Svelund, DEQ Regional Solutions Center Liaison and others
Peter Gutowsky, CDD Director
Todd Cleveland, Onsite Wastewater Manager